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Worst project of 2009: \$1.9 million for “Water Taxis to Nowhere”;

List totals nearly \$16 million in wasteful earmarks and stimulus programs with little benefit to taxpayers;

Last year Congress approved more than 10,000 earmarks at \$19.6 billion

WASHINGTON - With the national debt exceeding \$12 trillion and federal spending reaching unprecedented levels, U.S. Representatives Mark Kirk, co-chair of the Centrist GOP Tuesday Group, and Tom Price, Chairman of the Republican Study Committee, today unveiled “Top 11 Worst Spending Projects of the 111th Congress.” Joining the representatives was Council for Citizens Against Government Waste President Tom Schatz.

Totaling nearly \$16 million, the list highlights the most wasteful earmarks and stimulus projects approved by Congress this year. Congressman Kirk is the only member of the House Appropriations Committee who does not earmark taxpayer dollars, and voted against the \$787 billion stimulus plan. Congressman Price, another member who does not earmark, has also led efforts to oppose the stimulus and reduce the spending levels in Congress.

“From ‘water taxis to nowhere’ to millions for sidewalk art, the ‘Top 11 Worst Spending Projects of the 111th Congress’ list represents the worst of the worst in wasteful government spending,” Congressman Kirk said. “Last month, our national debt reached \$12 trillion, or about \$39,000 for every man, woman and child in the United States. With wasteful practices like earmarks and bloated federal programs, it’s easy to see how we got to this point. Families across the country are making tough choices to live within their means. It’s time Congress follows suit, with meaningful earmark reform, a line item veto to help presidents cut waste and a Balanced

Budget Amendment to the Constitution ensuring Congress reins in spending and protects taxpayers.”

“Perhaps only matched by our fiscal deficits, this Congress is currently suffering a deficit of public trust,” Congressman Price said. “This disdain for Washington starts and ends with the reckless spending that has come to define the status quo. While Americans work day and night to provide for their families’ and personal prosperity, they look at Washington and only see their hard earned tax dollars misused and abused. The greatest symbol of respect we can give to taxpayers is a renewed prudence in spending tax dollars that matches the sacrifice Americans make to earn them.”

The list is indicative of the runaway spending approved by the 111th Congress. Last year, Congress approved more than 10,000 earmarks, exceeding \$19.6 billion in taxpayer dollars. With a trillion dollar health care bill approved by the House and a new omnibus appropriations bill expected by the end of the year, the Administration is asking Congress to approve an increase in the “debt ceiling,” allowing the U.S. Treasury to borrow more. The current debt ceiling is \$12.1 trillion.

[Click here](#) to view the Top 11 Worst Spending Projects of the 111th Congress.

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